MINERS ARE MILITANT
ENGLESTEIN REPORTS

Visiting Gillespie Heartening To Commonwealth Teacher

By FRED SQUIRES

David Englestein, teacher of public speaking and world history, has just returned from a speaking tour of Macoupin county, Illinois, the birth-place of the Progressive Miners of America. He reports a militancy alive in Gillespie, and other towns of the county, that is encouraging and significant at a time when the whole country is watching the struggle that the Illinois miners are having with the U. M. W. A., coal operators and the state administration.

“Visiting a militant center such as Gillespie is heartening,” he declared, “and gives point to one's work in aiding the construction of a strong labor movement in this country.” Recounting his experiences to the Commonwealth group, David described the extremely class-conscious attitude of the miners, as exemplified, for instance, in the hard-hitting spirit of the fighting Unemployed Council in Gillespie, a united front organization of all working class groups in the city.

RANK AND FILE INTEREST

“The man on the street,” David said, “was as cognizant of the role he must play in bringing about a new social order as were the organizer and the leader. No meeting which I attended rode smoothly along on the well-oiled machinery of bureaucracy, Placeups and objections from the rank and file members were frequent, indicating a keen interest in their organizations and a determination not to have anything and everything shoved down their throats.

“The miners themselves were ably seconded by the women, whose P. M. A. Auxiliary gained national attention through its march to Springfield some time ago. Ten thousand women, garbed in white, showed at that time their determination to stick by their men in their struggle for recognition.”

Gillespie Conference

By LIBBIE VOLPIE

Delegate From Commonwealth College

By freight and highway, without finances, dressed in their work clothes, these 164 delegates from 26 labor groups have come. (Every political faction is represented.) Rubbing elbows with the politically immature are some of the keenest students in the labor movement.

It is an eventful day. At 11 a.m., the conference begins. Reports of labor struggles are given by delegates. Meanwhile the executive board withdraws to formulate hastily an agenda which is soon ignored in the uncharted discussion. The recommendation of the policy committee to endorse the T. U. U. L. call to a conference and send fifteen delegates is voted down in favor of sending three delegates, without the endorsement. Three delegates are elected to the Mooney conference. After a skirmish, two delegates are elected to the Continental Congress on Economic Reconstruction.

PURPOSE IS EDUCATIONAL

The proponents of a Progressive Federation of Labor are defeated in favor of a progressive educational organization. This is done on the grounds that the organization is too weak as yet to oppose the A. F. of L. In keeping with this policy, the name Progressive Trade Union Educational Committee is adopted.

An inexperienced chairman permits the meeting to become almost chaotic. Discussions rage for hours, and delegates leave in weariness or disgust. Yet the very foundenings of the conference prove that it is on the right track. Here are no suave officials, no belwether politicians, no velvet-gloved demagogues. The unfamiliarity with parliamentary law, the tangled speeches, the timidity that makes some speeches incomprehensible, all are indications of the genuine working class complexion of this movement. The time is ripe for this organization.

For the rest — the future of the P. T. U. E. C. is in its own hands.

KOCH AND JONES ON COLLEGE FIELD TRIPS

Cunningham To Visit Oklahoma City and Norman in May

Friends of Commonwealth College in two sections of the country are getting a first hand account of the school through field trips being made at this time by members of the faculty.

Lucien Koch, director, left Commonwealth April 10 and is now in Chicago, where he will remain until April 20. He will be in Madison April 21 to 24, Milwaukee April 25 to 28, Chicago again from April 29 to May 7. He will be in Kansas City about May 10 and will spend approximately one month in that city and in the state of Kansas.

H. Lee Jones, psychology instructor, is now in Dayton. He will proceed to Indianapolis about April 18. Early in May he will take part in a Worker's Institute to be held at Indianapolis. Throughout May and most of June he will visit various Ohio cities.

William Cunningham, teacher of labor journalism, will be in Oklahoma City and in Norman, Oklahoma, sometime during the latter part of May.

Any one living in the various cities to be visited by these Commonwealth instructors may arrange to talk with them by corresponding immediately with the executive secretary of the college.

COMMONWEALTH SUMMER CAMP ANNOUNCED

The inside pages of this issue of the Fortnightly contain an announcement of the summer camp which is to be held during the months of July, August and the first week of September.

Oscar Ameringer and Nathan Fine will be here, Ameringer as a lecturer for two weeks and Fine as a teacher for the entire term.

Readers are asked to pass this copy to friends who have not yet made plans for the summer.
A vacation of a kind not obtainable anywhere else and at a cost as low as $1 a week—that is what the Commonwealth College Summer Camp offers to workers, teachers, students, professional people and others who are interested in participating for a while this summer in the college's unique and stimulating community life.

Not only is Commonwealth an intellectual center for progressive ideas and the cause of labor in the Middle West and Southwest, but its site by a mountain stream in the wooded Ouachitas of western Arkansas makes it a particularly beautiful spot in which to spend a vacation.

Opportunities for rest, study, discussion and outdoor recreation—in the proportions desired—are provided at the summer camp. Furthermore, those who wish to halve their expenses by helping 15 hours a week at communal tasks, such as gardening, cooking, canning, etc., have the privilege of doing so.

The Commonwealth atmosphere is quite informal. There is little regimentation. For those who wish to attend them, there will be interesting lectures and discussions, given or led by members of the college staff and by visiting lecturers, some of them nationally outstanding in the labor movement. But those who prefer to spend their time in reading, hiking or swimming, or just sitting in the sun, enjoy the company of their fellows, to whom they are welcome to exercise that option most people will want to do some of both.

HILL COUNTRY

Commonwealth is located on a section unspoilt by tourists, billboards, dump heaps, deforestation miles to get books from the Commonwealth library.

The old time square dance, almost forgotten in more prosperous sections, is the favorite form of recreation here. Even the young people do not care for the modern, or the “round” dance, as they call it. Commonwealth has frequent dances for its neighbors and Communists have an opportunity not only to witness authentic American folk dancing but to participate in it. Some of the Commonwealth teachers and students who have been at the school for some time, are quite as good at the old steps as are the natives.

DISCUSSION GROUPS AND CLASSES

Most of the Commonwealth classes and discussion groups during the summer are held under the trees. The atmosphere is entirely informal. Attendance is voluntary. Extensive reading lists are handed out so that the guest may do as much serious work as he wishes.

The three main features of the summer will be discussion and lecture courses on these topics: “Is American Culture Going Left?” “Economics and Politics—Where Are We Headed?” and “History of the American Labor Movement.” These courses are open to all newcomers, in addition to the unique labor orientation course, worked out at Commonwealth during the past year. This course, open to all newcomers, is a rapid survey of world history and current problems from the labor point of view. It is intended as an introduction to the world of labor philosophy and culture. Needless to say, it is unlike any course offered at a conventional college or university.

Arrangements have already been made for Oscar Ameringer and his wife to conduct a series of courses on the history and philosophy of the American labor movement. 

RECREATION

Besides hiking through the pine woods and up the mountains, and swimming in the mountain stream that borders the campus, Commonwealt has a variety of recreations. Conversation is perhaps the chief of these. Here persons from all parts of the nation, and from foreign countries, meet and exchange ideas upon a variety of topics ranging from economics to butterflies. The atmosphere is one of constant intellectual stimulation.

Commonwealth's two tennis courts are a favorite spot for a leisurely game. 

GUESTS MAY WORK

The unique feature of Commonwealth summer camp is that guests may help with the work and thereby cut their costs in half. Students and teachers of Commonwealth College work on the farm, in the kitchen, office, cannery, laundries, etc. They do their work with great skill and efficiency.

The following table will enable you to estimate exactly what it will cost you to stay at Commonwealth this summer for room, board, laundry service and tuition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Non-working Guests</th>
<th>Children under 12</th>
<th>Children under 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 8-Week</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 8-Week</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(maximum ten weeks)

These rates are for children accompanied by their parents. Children do not work.

That is, if you work, the total cost to you (board, room, laundry and tuition) will be $1 if you stay one day, $25 if you stay one week, $40 if you stay ten weeks.

Commonwealth of course does not have the comforts of a high-priced summer resort. Only the public buildings—library, commons, store, printshop, laundry, kitchen, etc. have electricity.

WHAT TO BRING AND HOW TO GET HERE

Commonwealth is located near and midway between Fort Smith and Little Rock, Arkansas. From any large city in the South, it is a good rail connection. The nearest large city is Little Rock, and the train is made every day.

You can spend your vacation at Commonwealth College, in the Ouachita Mountains, if you want to “help with the chores” fifteen hours a week, at a cost as low as four dollars a week, or twice that amount if you want to leaf all the time.

Read the description of the recreational and intellectual life at this unique labor institution.

***************
Commonwealth is a section of Arkansas unspoiled by tourists, billboards, dump heaps, deforestation or jazz music. The Ouachita mountains are the southernmost range of the Ozarks, and are famous for their beauty. But because of the poverty of the soil these highlands are sparsely settled. It is possible to go on an all-day hike through almost virgin wilderness without encountering a sign of human habitation. There are no factories to pollute the streams. The water is muddy only a few hours after a heavy rain and is never stagnant. Squirrels scamper over the roofs of campus buildings and birds fly down chimneys.

Fishing is not very good in the immediate vicinity of Commonwealth, but enthusiastic fishermen do nevertheless indulge their favorite sport here. At certain seasons hikers may pause whenever they feel hungry and eat all they can hold of wild berries or muscadines (large green-skinned wild grapes). Hikes, long and short, are one of the chief diversions of Commoners.

There are farmers in this section, of course, living on patches of flat land in the valleys. They are people of pioneer mountain stock, who live much as their grandparents lived seventy-five years ago — perhaps in the houses which their grandparen-
s built. Some of them do not have stoves but do all their cooking over the open hearth. Oxen are still used within a mile of the Commonwealth campus. Neighborhood children sometimes walk four or five miles to get there.

WEALTH CAMPUS.

stoves but do all their cooking.

Arrangements have already been made for Oscar Ameringer and Nathan Fine to be at Commonwealth this summer. Ameringer, called the dean of American labor journalism, is widely known as a writer and speaker. His pen-name, Adam Coalfigger, is revered by millions, and almost as many have heard him give his thumb-and-finger analysis of our economic system. Here persons from all parts of the nation, and from foreign countries, meet and exchange ideas upon a variety of topics ranging from economics to butterflies. The atmosphere is one of constant intellectual stimulation.

Commonwealth's two tennis courts are often busy, but not too busy — that is, one need not sit for an hour waiting for a chance to play. There are several group entertainments each week, although most of these are of intellectual nature — forums, debates, etc. At least once a week is devoted to dramatics, college dance, stunt night, or a neighborhood dance. Several plays will be staged during the summer by the Commonwealth theater group. Students, teachers and campers participate in this dramatic work.

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION COURSES

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE SUMMER CAMP

Ten Weeks, July 3 to September 9

Oscar Ameringer

Director Research Department of the Rand School of Social Science; Editor the American Labor Year Book, Writer, etc.

Nathan Fine

Editor American Guardian

Dean of American Labor Journalism

Witter, Lecturer, Humorist, etc.

Together with other prominent visiting lecturers and the members of the regular Commonwealth staff will speak and lead discussions on:

Economics and Politics — Where Are We Headed?

Contents include such topics as: Will Prosperity Return? Unemployment and Its causes; What is the Old Order? Will an American Labor Party Come to Power? The Permanent Labor Force in America Labor and Its Functions: Marxism After Philip Snowden; The Power of Money in World Politics: Imperialism and the War Danger: Russia's Two Five-Year Plans; The Farmer Becomes a Corporationist; The Race Problem; Liberalism and Fascism.

Is American Culture Going Left?

What is Prejudice? Culture; Does the Media Treat the Black Class Fairly? Black Art; American Art Today; Black Culture; Black Power; Art and Socialism; Art and the Union; Art and the Liberation of American Literature.

Also the unique Labor Orientation Course by the entire Commonwealth faculty.

A series of sixty lectures upon such topics as: The Social Life of Primitive Man; Creation Myths; Economic Basis of Greek Culture; The Papacy and the Crusades; The American Constitution; Scientific Socialism; Rise of Modern Nationalism; Origins of the World War; From Industrial to Capitalist Finance; etc.

Also regular Commonwealth College courses in labor problems, philosophy of Marxism, psychology, journalism, labor drama, farm problems, etc., primarily for regularly enrolled students who plan to remain and complete the college course.

Address Inquiries to the Executive Secretary, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas.

HILL COUNTRY

Commonwealth is located a section unspoiled by tourists, billboards, dump heaps, deforestation or jazz music. The Ouachita mountains are the southernmost range of the Ozarks, and are famous for their beauty. But because of the poverty of the soil these highlands are sparsely settled. It is possible to go on an all-day hike through almost virgin wilderness without encountering a sign of human habitation. There are no factories to pollute the streams. The water is muddy only a few hours after a heavy rain and is never stagnant. Squirrels scamper over the roofs of campus buildings and birds fly down chimneys.

Fishing is not very good in the immediate vicinity of Commonwealth, but enthusiastic fishermen do nevertheless indulge their favorite sport here. At certain seasons hikers may pause whenever they feel hungry and eat all they can hold of wild berries or muscadines (large green-skinned wild grapes). Hikes, long and short, are one of the chief diversions of Commoners.

There are farmers in this section, of course, living on patches of flat land in the valleys. They are people of pioneer mountain stock, who live much as their grandparents lived seventy-five years ago — perhaps in the houses which their grandparen-
s built. Some of them do not have stoves but do all their cooking over the open hearth. Oxen are still used within a mile of the Commonwealth campus. Neighborhood children sometimes walk four or five miles to get there.

WEALTH CAMPUS.

stoves but do all their cooking.

Arrangements have already been made for Oscar Ameringer and Nathan Fine to be at Commonwealth this summer. Ameringer, called the dean of American labor journalism, is widely known as a writer and speaker. His pen-name, Adam Coalfigger, is revered by millions, and almost as many have heard him give his thumb-and-finger analysis of our economic system. Here persons from all parts of the nation, and from foreign countries, meet and exchange ideas upon a variety of topics ranging from economics to butterflies. The atmosphere is one of constant intellectual stimulation.

Commonwealth's two tennis courts are often busy, but not too busy — that is, one need not sit for an hour waiting for a chance to play. There are several group entertainments each week, although most of these are of intellectual nature — forums, debates, etc. At least once a week is devoted to dramatics, college dance, stunt night, or a neighborhood dance. Several plays will be staged during the summer by the Commonwealth theater group. Students, teachers and campers participate in this dramatic work.

TECTURE AND DISCUSSION COURSES

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE SUMMER CAMP

Ten Weeks, July 3 to September 9

Oscar Ameringer

Editor American Guardian

Dean of American Labor Journalism

Witter, Lecturer, Humorist, etc.

Nathan Fine

Director Research Department of the Rand School of Social Science; Editor the American Labor Year Book, Writer, etc.

Together with other prominent visiting lecturers and the members of the regular Commonwealth staff will speak and lead discussions on:

Economics and Politics — Where Are We Headed?

Contents include such topics as: Will Prosperity Return? Unemployment and Its causes; What is the Old Order? Will an American Labor Party Come to Power? The Permanent Labor Force in America Labor and Its Functions: Marxism After Philip Snowden; The Power of Money in World Politics: Imperialism and the War Danger: Russia's Two Five-Year Plans; The Farmer Becomes a Corporationist; The Race Problem; Liberalism and Fascism.

Is American Culture Going Left?

What is Prejudice? Culture; Does the Media Treat the Black Class Fairly? Black Art; American Art Today; Black Culture; Black Power; Art and Socialism; Art and the Union; Art and the Liberation of American Literature.

Also the unique Labor Orientation Course by the entire Commonwealth faculty.

A series of sixty lectures upon such topics as: The Social Life of Primitive Man; Creation Myths; Economic Basis of Greek Culture; The Papacy and the Crusades; The American Constitution; Scientific Socialism; Rise of Modern Nationalism; Origins of the World War; From Industrial to Capitalist Finance; etc.

Also regular Commonwealth College courses in labor problems, philosophy of Marxism, psychology, journalism, labor drama, farm problems, etc., primarily for regularly enrolled students who plan to remain and complete the college course.

Address Inquiries to the Executive Secretary, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas.
IS NON-FACTIONAL LABOR EDUCATION POSSIBLE?

By LUCIEN KOCH

In the last issue of the Fortnightly David Englestein discussed the nature and function of non-factional labor education. He pointed out correctly that such education is rooted in a class-conscious philosophy, that it is purposeful in preparing frankly for the establishment of a worker's government, and that its main function is to give the student a theoretical training which is broad enough to lead to clarification and intelligent working-class action.

I think there is no question as to the need of such education. It is a type of united front activity very much neglected. If effective, it will help knock the under-pinnings out from under the existing factional strife so destructive in its results.

But at Commonwealth non-factional labor education is not an abstraction—it is real to us because of the problems which it presents. This accounts for the query "Is it possible?" which has been raised more than once by different members of the group. Each time much discussion follows. In these discussions there is a straightforward admission of difficulties, but always an unshaken conviction that non-factional labor education is at the present time most constructive as well as feasible.

But what are some of the problems that loom up in this connection? More particularly, what problems do we face at Commonwealth because of our non-factionalism? As we too well know, it can be the cause of serious trouble.

Let me approach the problem by pointing out to you again the distinctive features that go to make up the Commonwealth environment. These features which should be borne in mind are: (1) that we are radical and so appeal to the rebel, who may be either an individualistic, temperamental insurgent or a constructive class radical opposed to an exploiting system; (2) that Commonwealth is a residential school located in a backward rural community ten miles from the closest village of about 3000 inhabitants; (3) that we operate on a communal basis where social relations are intimate and unavoidable; (4) that Commonwealth is owned and administered internally by the association of teachers and students and not by an outside board of directors; (5) then too we must not overlook the fact that we adhere to a non-factional policy, permitting both teachers and students to express their personal convictions but forbidding the college as an institution from aligning itself with any factional program. The purpose of the college is to arrive at a solution.

After Commonwealth re-evaluated and clarified its function as a labor school in the summer of 1931, it attracted a somewhat different student body, that it revised the curriculum, it emphasized social instead of individual education. At that time the governing body of students and teachers was as yet unaware of the new problems it would have to face because of this new militant program. However, two years of experience have been a valuable instructor. They have driven out some naiveté in order to make room for a degree of political maturity.

We learned by the end of the first year that pure democracy and non-factional labor education do not mix. There must be some centralized authority. That authority cannot be the Communist, Socialist, or C. P. I. A. campus organizations. They are healthy and desirable organizations it is true, but they are interested, in the last analysis, in factionalism rather than non-factionalism, although they may accept the latter theoretically. The real danger lies in having a temperamental rebel get the upper hand in such a factional setup because of the political immaturity of its members.

Since that is the case, it is desirable that Commonwealth be governed by a body loyal to the principle of non-factional education. However, due to the factional nature of campus opinion and organizations this body must expect sporadic opposition. Its problem is to accept that fact and then deal with the opposition in such a way as to prevent too great interference with effective education.

It is easy to build up dissension in a group of radicals. Their inclination is to object. They object to authority, particularly if it is of a capitalistic variety, although the condition of extreme factionalism in the movement today is a telling example that they sometimes do so even if it is of a labor variety. Yet as has already been illustrated, non-factional labor education demands some form of direction and discipline and authority. Here then is the point around which conflict might wage. In it there is dynamite. A politically ambitious member of the community usually belonging to the temperamental category, may, through clever maneuvering, create an explosion. It becomes necessary, therefore, to work for the exclusion from the campus of the political play-boys and to seek the earnest radical whose rebellion is motivated by a class-conscious philosophy.

This becomes doubly important since the political play-boy has an indomitable will to egotistic expression. He cannot seek that expression at an industrial dispute or strike situation. He cannot readily change his environment unless he leaves the school. He is not always able to sublimate through productive study or a brilliant performance in the classroom. His horizon is limited by the physical boundaries of the community. The other members of the community must be girt for his mill.

If he is worthy of the name, the political play-boy has enough intuitive judgment and native shrewdness to realize that in a radical environment he must use the issue of the conservative versus the revolutionary. He is adept at mouthing revolutionary phrases that he understands only imperfectly. Thus he cloaks his temperamental need for expression behind a cause that is supposedly revolutionary but really reactionary. He attempts to bring the class struggle to the campus. Because of his revolutionary front and skilful at staying he is able to attach himself to him, a following which is deceived for the moment at least, by its own emotionalism and political immaturity.

In a factional labor school this difficulty is mitigated if not completely avoided. There is less opportunity to develop organized dissension when all students tend to be uniform in their political conviction. They are selected for that reason, they are all impregnated supposedly with the same constituent radical ingredients. Hence it is less likely that the issue of conservative versus revolutionary will be raised. They are all revolutionists together, regardless of their political tint.

Consequently such a campus is not a fertile field for either the temperamental or sincere disserter. In contrast, the problems of a non-factional labor school are involved and complex. However, the service rendered to the present labor movement by such education justifies the energy spent in grappling with them in an effort to arrive at a solution of them.

Commonwealth College
Fortnightly

PRINTED AT COMMONWEALTH
BY STUDENT AND TEACHER LABOR

VOL. IX. No. 8 April 15, 1933

Published twice a month at Meno, Arkansas, by Commonwealth College. Subscription one dollar a year. Entered as second class matter, January 30, 1928, at the post office at Meno, Arkansas, under the act of August 24, 1912.

Signed articles express only individual opinion.